

### REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended.

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that Claims 8-10, 15-17, 27, 31 and 33-35 are directed to allowable subject matter.

Without acceding to the outstanding rejections, Claims 8-10, 15-17, 27, 31 and 33-35 have been rewritten in independent form. In particular, Claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of allowable Claim 8 and intervening Claims 2-5 and 7 (now cancelled), Claim 11 has been amended to include the subject matter of allowable Claim 15 and intervening Claim 12 (now cancelled), and Claim 24 has been amended to include the subject matter of allowable Claim 27 and intervening Claims 25 and 26 (now cancelled). Additionally, Claim 31 has been rewritten in independent form as new Claim 37, and Claim 33 has been rewritten in independent form as new Claim 38. Dependent Claims 34 and 35 have been cancelled in favor of new dependent Claims 39 and 40. Claims 2-8, 12, 15, 18-23 and 25-36 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Non-elected Claims 18-20 have also been cancelled for presentation in a divisional application.

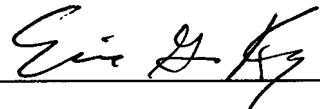
Thus, Claims 1, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 24 and 37-40 are pending and in condition for allowance.

A Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge to Deposit Account No. 50-1165 any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 that may be required by this paper and to credit any overpayment to that Account. If any extension of time is required in connection with the filing of this paper and has not been requested separately, such extension is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

MWS:EGK

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